

Role playing materials

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PROPOSITIONS
regarding the dissertation
Role Playing Materials

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Maastricht 2016

1. Materials matter in role-playing games, because materials collaborate and demand actions from better known elements, such as narrative (story, background information, characters) and ludic actors (mechanics, rules, structure).
2. Larp remains a niche hobby in the 2010s. One reason related to materials is that role playing in larp requires a functional costume. Such a costume needs time, skills and / or money to make, maintain, and develop throughout the years.
3. Role-playing games that use virtual or augmented reality technology will develop into forms which will go beyond the distinction between digital and analog games.
4. A tabletop role-playing game session often seems messy, but every arrangement follows the requirements for collaboration between material, narrative, and ludic actors.
5. Actor-network theory helps game studies researchers to ask how games are constructed from diverse elements, instead of focusing on the essentialist question of what games are. Additionally, actor-network theory raises the self-awareness of the researcher by pointing out that the process of asking questions is also itself a constructed process. Actor-network theory benefits from the study of games because games are a hugely popular type of entertainment technology, and studying games adds to the understanding of other self-organizing, multi-centered technologies.
6. While many still consider role-playing games as an easy and sometimes dangerous means to escape reality, even a brief moment of immersion during role playing forces one to recognize the enormous amount of work that is required from heterogeneous actors.
7. When doing ethnography within a gaming community, it is sometimes difficult to clarify one's work to oneself and to the communities of study. It can help to remember the instruction: "The primary job of a researcher is to ask questions."
8. Role playing can help people to develop empathy and imagination. *Role Playing Materials* becomes available for free as an open access pdf, and for sale as a printed book or e-book. Any returns will be donated to non-profit organizations that promote role-play with children.